(d) Expenditure on fuel, repairs and maintenance of boats and training of marine police for a period of 5 years is estimated to be Rs. 151 crore for all the States/Union Territories covered under the Scheme. In addition, the expenditure on the police stations would also include manpower to be sanctioned by the State Governments.

Meeting of Chief Ministers on Naxal problems

208. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Standing Committee of Chief Ministers of Naxal affected States under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister had a meeting in April 2006 to discuss the growing naxal menace in the country;

(b) if so, whether CMs have urged Centre to take measures and provide help and assistance and co-ordinate with affected States to meet menace of naxal activities jointly;

(c) if so, whether the Centre has suggested to raise reserve battalions in civil and police administration and Centre will reimburse 75 per cent of standard costs of Reserve Battalions; and

(d) to what extent these steps helped in curtailing naxal menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) The 2nd meeting of the Standing Committee of the Chief Ministers of naxal affected States was held on 13.4.2006 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. While, on the security front, the meeting, *inter-alia*, underlined the need for building up security and intelligence capabilities at State level and for preparation/ revision and implementation of action plans to address the security and development aspects of the naxalite problem, better coordination between RPF, GRP, local police and other agencies to ensure safety of railway passengers, trains and other railway infrastructure, the agenda items on the development front, comprised effective implementation of land reforms, rehabilitation and resettlement policy for displaced tribals, speedy implementation of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996 etc.

(c) The naxal affected States have been sanctioned India Reserve (IR) battalions to strengthen security apparatus at their level as also to enable them to provide gainful employment to the youth, particularly in the naxal areas. The initial cost of raising of IR Bns (Rs. 20.75 crore per Bn) is borne by the Central Government.

(d) The overall naxal situation in the country continues to be an area of serious concern. Till the end of June this year, while the number of naxal incidents declined by 12%, the resultant deaths increased by 16%.

Scrapping of Official Secrets Act, 1923

209. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Administrative Reforms Commission has recommended scrapping of the Official Secrets Act and inclusion of some of its safeguards in the National Security Act; and

(b) if so, whether Government have accepted the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Necessary action has been initiated to process this recommendation.

Custodial deaths

210. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to Amnesty International's annual report, the number of custodial deaths is increasing every year in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the steps being taken by Government to prevent custodial deaths;

(d) whether Government are considering to bring in any legislation to arrest custodial deaths; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?